

What is claimed is:

1. A method of operating an electronic marketplace for the development of inventions, comprising:

soliciting, for use by participants in said marketplace, an invention submission relating to an invention; and

soliciting, from said participants, response submissions concerning said invention, wherein said response submissions include:

one or more responses relating to contributions to development of the invention;

and

one or more responses relating to exchange of intellectual property rights regarding the invention.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the participants represent organizations independent of an operator of the marketplace.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one submitter of said responses relating to contributions to development of the invention represents an organization independent of that of a submitter of the invention submission.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one submitter of said responses relating to exchange of intellectual property rights represents an organization independent of that of a submitter of the invention submission.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein the invention is improved in accordance with said one or more responses relating to contributions to development, and wherein said one or more responses relating to exchange of intellectual property rights correspond to the improved invention.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein said one or more responses relating to exchange of intellectual property rights relate to exchange with parties unaffiliated with said marketplace.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein said invention is not protected by an issued patent.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein said invention is not protected by a patent application filing.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein said invention submission is in sufficient detail to serve as a defensive publication for patenting purposes.
10. The method of claim 1, wherein said marketplace, by maintaining access to an audit trail of a contribution of said invention submission and contributions of said one or more responses relating to contributions, facilitates evaluation of inventorship in said invention.
11. The method of claim 1, wherein said marketplace, by maintaining access to an audit trail of a contribution of said invention submission and contributions of said one or more responses relating to contributions, facilitates documentation of inventorship in said invention.
12. The method of claim 1, wherein said marketplace is an Internet marketplace.

13. The method of claim 1, further comprising facilitating delivery of value to an inventor of said invention.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein said value relates to obtaining support for said invention.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein said support relates to development of said invention.

16. The method of claim 14, wherein said support relates to commercialization of said invention.

17. The method of claim 14, wherein said support is in a form other than license.

18. The method of claim 14, wherein said support is in a form other than assignment.

19. The method of claim 14, wherein said support relates to filing a nonprovisional patent application.

20. The method of claim 13, wherein said value is an offer to license said invention.

21. The method of claim 13, wherein said value is an offer to purchase rights to said invention.

22. The method of claim 13, wherein said value is facilitated access to publicity external to said marketplace.

23. The method of claim 13, wherein said value is recognition of inventor contribution.
24. The method of claim 13, wherein said value is enhancement of inventor reputation.
25. The method of claim 13, wherein said value is awareness of the invention that is supportive of marketing of the invention.
26. The method of claim 13, wherein said value relates to an alternative reward system operating as a shadow patent system.
27. The method of claim 13, wherein said value is know-how.
28. The method of claim 1, wherein said marketplace tracks date of first publication corresponding to said invention and directs attention of said participants to an applicable deadline for filing a patent application.
29. The method of claim 1, wherein certain of said responses relating to contributions to development contain feedback relating to others of said responses relating to contributions to development.
30. The method of claim 1, wherein said responses relating to contributions to development include ratings of said invention.

31. The method of claim 1, wherein said responses relating to contributions to development include contributions on enhancements to said invention.

32. The method of claim 1, wherein said responses relating to contributions to development include ratings of the participants.

33. The method of claim 1, wherein said responses relating to contributions to development include contributions relating to protection of intellectual property relating to said invention.

34. The method of claim 1, wherein said responses relating to contributions to development include contributions relating to commercial value of said invention.

35. The method of claim 1, wherein said responses relating to contributions to development include contributions relating to social value of said invention.

36. The method of claim 1, wherein said responses relating to contributions to development are employed to draw attention to said invention as displaying promise.

37. The method of claim 1, wherein said responses relating to contributions to development are employed to develop one or more concepts relating to said invention.

38. The method of claim 1, wherein said responses relating to contributions to development are employed to develop commercial value relating to said invention.

39. The method of claim 1, wherein said responses relating to contributions to development are employed to develop social value relating to said invention.

40. The method of claim 1, wherein said responses relating to contributions to development are employed to identify prior art relating to said invention.

41. The method of claim 1, wherein said responses relating to contributions to development are employed to assess prior art relating to said invention.

42. The method of claim 1, wherein said responses relating to contributions to development are employed to locate investors for said invention.

43. The method of claim 1, wherein said responses relating to contributions to development are employed to locate licensees for said invention.

44. The method of claim 1, wherein said responses relating to contributions to development are employed to locate buyers for said invention.

45. The method of claim 1, wherein said responses relating to contributions to development are employed to find an end market for said invention.

46. The method of claim 1, wherein said responses relating to contributions to development are employed to identify practice of said invention.

47. The method of claim 1, wherein implicit feedback on said invention is inferred by analysis.

48. The method of claim 47, wherein said analysis includes graph structure analysis.

49. The method of claim 1, wherein a multitude of invention submissions are collected, and wherein said participants may view said multitude of invention submissions in accordance with specified ranking criteria.

50. The method of claim 49, wherein said specified ranking criteria includes time since first publication.

51. The method of claim 49, wherein said specified ranking criteria includes time until one year deadline for filing a patent application.

52. The method of claim 49, wherein said specified ranking criteria includes inventor ranking.

53. The method of claim 49, wherein said specified ranking criteria includes domain authority ranking.

54. The method of claim 49, wherein said specified ranking criteria includes contributor reputation.

55. The method of claim 49, wherein said specified ranking criteria includes ratings profile.

56. The method of claim 49, wherein said specified ranking criteria includes exposure profile.

57. The method of claim 1, wherein said participants include inventors.

58. The method of claim 1, wherein said participants include independent raters.

59. The method of claim 1, wherein said participants include advisors.

60. The method of claim 1, wherein said participants include collaborators.

61. The method of claim 1, wherein said participants include commercializers.

62. The method of claim 1, wherein said participants include implementers.

63. The method of claim 1, wherein said participants include investors.

64. The method of claim 1, wherein said participants include fee-oriented support service providers.

65. The method of claim 1, wherein said participants include end users.

66. The method of claim 1, wherein said participants include consumers.

67. The method of claim 1, wherein said participants include representatives of government entities.

68. The method of claim 1, wherein said participants include representatives of regulatory agencies.

69. The method of claim 1, wherein said participants include groups.

70. The method of claim 69, wherein said groups include expert panels.

71. The method of claim 1, wherein said participants include individuals with special roles.

72. The method of claim 71, wherein said individuals with special roles include dialog managers.

73. The method of claim 1, wherein said marketplace employs collaborative support system methods.

74. The method of claim 73, wherein social decision support systems are employed.

75. The method of claim 73, wherein techniques for visualizing collaborative activity are employed.

76. The method of claim 73, wherein techniques for visualizing social translucence are employed.

77. The method of claim 73, wherein social proxies are employed.

78. The method of claim 73, wherein threaded asynchronous messaging is employed.

79. The method of claim 73, wherein real-time chat is employed.

80. The method of claim 73, wherein reputation management systems are employed.

81. The method of claim 1, wherein said marketplace employs analytic techniques.

82. The method of claim 81, wherein said analytic techniques include lexical analysis.

83. The method of claim 81, wherein said analytic techniques include semantic analysis.

84. The method of claim 81, wherein said analytic techniques include concept analysis.

85. The method of claim 81, wherein categorization systems are employed.

86. The method of claim 1, wherein said marketplace produces revenue.

87. The method of claim 86, wherein said revenue includes share in licensing deals.

88. The method of claim 86, wherein said revenue includes share in assignment deals.

89. The method of claim 86, wherein said revenue includes sponsorship funds.

90. The method of claim 86, wherein said revenue includes advertising funds.

91. The method of claim 86, wherein said revenue includes participant fees.

92. The method of claim 86, wherein said revenue includes viewer fees.

93. The method of claim 91, wherein said participant fees are usage fees.

94. The method of claim 91, wherein said participant fees are membership fees.

95. The method of claim 92, wherein said viewer fees are usage fees.

96. The method of claim 92, wherein said viewer fees are membership fees.

97. The method of claim 86, wherein said revenue includes charitable contributions.

98. The method of claim 86, wherein said revenue includes government funding.

99. The method of claim 86, wherein said revenue includes equity share in an alternative reward system operating as a shadow patent system.

100. The method of claim 86, wherein said revenue includes phantom equity share in an alternative reward system operating as a shadow patent system.

101. The method of claim 1, further comprising assessing economic factors relating to commercialization of said invention.

102. The method of claim 101, wherein assessing comprises consideration of deadlines relating to filing a patent publication.

103. The method of claim 101, wherein assessing comprises consideration of remaining tasks.

104. The method of claim 101, wherein assessing comprises consideration of expected deal complexity.

105. The method of claim 101, wherein assessing comprises consideration of deal status.

106. The method of claim 105, wherein consideration of deal status includes consideration of pending agreements.

107. The method of claim 105, wherein consideration of deal status includes consideration of patent status.

108. The method of claim 101, wherein assessing comprises consideration of need for further of said responses relating to contributions to development of the invention.

109. The method of claim 101, wherein assessing comprises consideration of an intrinsic value of said invention.

110. The method of claim 101, wherein assessing comprises consideration of a time-varying value of said invention.

111. The method of claim 110, wherein said time-varying value is deadline related.

112. The method of claim 1, further comprising performing workflow management tasks.

113. The method of claim 112, wherein said workflow management tasks correspond to defined steps and schedules.

114. The method of claim 112, wherein said workflow management tasks correspond to patent application filing deadlines.

115. The method of claim 112, wherein performance of workflow management tasks conforms to workflow complexity.

116. The method of claim 112, wherein performance of workflow management tasks conforms to deal complexity.

117. The method of claim 1, further comprising converting said invention submission into a format suitable for a patent application filing.

118. The method of claim 1, further comprising converting said responses relating to contributions to development of the invention into a format suitable for a patent application filing.

119. A method of operating an electronic marketplace for the development of inventions, comprising:

making available, for use by participants in said marketplace, information relating to an invention;

soliciting responses regarding the invention from said participants; and

facilitating delivery of value to an inventor of said invention.

120. The method of claim 119, wherein said value is provided by parties unaffiliated with said marketplace.

121. A method of operating a marketplace for the development of inventions, comprising:

making available, for use by participants in said marketplace, information relating to an invention;

recording a date of first publication relating to said invention;

soliciting responses regarding the invention from said participants; and

directing the attention of said participants to an applicable deadline for filing a patent application.

122. A method of operating a marketplace for the development of inventions, comprising:

collecting information regarding an invention submitted to said marketplace by one or more original inventors;

identifying entities practicing the invention;

receiving, from the practicing entities, a value corresponding to the submitted invention;

and

partitioning, among the one or more original inventors, the received value.

123. The method of claim 122, further comprising setting said value.

124. The method of claim 123, wherein the set value corresponds to a assessment of the value to said entities of the invention.

125. The method of claim 122, further comprising:

collecting information regarding one or more improvements to the invention, the one or more improvements submitted to said marketplace by one or more contributing inventors, wherein the one or more improvements are applied to the invention to yield an improved invention;

identifying entities practicing the improved invention;

assessing a value, to said entities practicing the improved invention, of the submitted invention;

assessing a value, to said entities practicing the improved invention, of the one or more improvements to the invention;

receiving a value from said entities practicing the improved invention ; and

partitioning, among the one or more original inventors and the one or more contributing inventors, the value received from said entities practicing the improved invention.

126. The method of claim 122, wherein partitioning comprises applying social decision support methods for determining a relative contribution of said original inventors to the improved invention.

127. The method of claim 122, wherein partitioning comprises applying social decision support methods for determining a relative contribution of said contributing inventors to the improved invention.

128. The method of claim 122, wherein partitioning takes into account the information regarding the one or more improvements.

129. The method of claim 122, wherein partitioning takes into account the information regarding the invention submitted by said original inventors.

130. The method of claim 122, wherein the original inventors, the contributing inventors, and the practicing entities agree to a scheme for performing said partitioning.

131. The method of claim 122, wherein said entities are subjected to social pressure in the case where the entities resist in providing said value.

132. The method of claim 131, wherein said social pressure is exerted by participants in said marketplace.

133. The method of claim 131, wherein said social pressure is exerted by individual external to said marketplace.

134. A method of operating a collaborative support system, comprising:

making available a plurality of alternatives for a collaborative support process of said system; and

applying one or more support processes active within said system to select for use one or more of said alternatives.

135. The method of claim 134, wherein the one or more active support processes includes a rating process.

136. The method of claim 134, wherein the one or more active support processes includes a ranking process.

137. The method of claim 134, wherein the one or more active support processes includes a decision making process.

138. The method of claim 134, wherein the collaborative process having alternatives is a rating process.

139. The method of claim 134, wherein the collaborative process having alternatives is a ranking process.

140. The method of claim 134, wherein the collaborative process having alternatives is a decision making process.

141. A method for operating an electronic marketplace for the development of inventions, comprising:

obtaining input from participants in said marketplace, said input relating to the development of an invention associated with said marketplace; and

facilitating the development of said invention, wherein collaborative support system techniques are employed in the facilitating.

142. The method of claim 141, wherein facilitating the development comprises assessing the need for said invention.

143. The method of claim 141, wherein facilitating the development comprises assessing stake of one of the participants in said marketplace in the invention.

144. The method of claim 141, wherein facilitating the development comprises facilitating the enhancement of said invention.

145. The method of claim 141, wherein facilitating the development comprises facilitating commercial application of said invention.

146. The method of claim 141, wherein facilitating the development comprises securing intellectual property rights for said invention.

147. A method of operating an electronic idea development community, comprising:

providing a shared medium for interactions between members of said idea development community;

receiving, from one or more of said members, rating data corresponding to one or more of the interactions; and

offering filtered viewing of said interactions, the filtering taking into account the received rating data.

148. The method of claim 147 wherein there is an authority level associated with each of said members, and wherein taking into account the received rating data comprises considering the authority levels associated with the one or more members from which the rating data was received.

149. The method of claim 147, further comprising:

receiving, from one or more individuals not members of said community, rating data corresponding to one or more of the interactions

150. A method of operating a marketplace for the development of inventions, comprising:

publishing items relating to invention disclosures by inventors to an open set of marketplace participants;

providing, to participants in said marketplace, information regarding an invention;

soliciting, from said participants, responses regarding said invention; and

presenting a value offering to one or more individuals having stake in said invention.

151. The method of claim 150. wherein said value offering corresponds to a commercialization deal in which the marketplace is a party.

152. The method of claim 150. wherein said value offering involves a party external to said marketplace.

153. A method for operating a marketplace community for the development of inventions, comprising:

receiving an invention submitted to said marketplace by one or more original inventors;

receiving one or more improvements to said invention, said one or more improvements submitted to said marketplace by one or more contributors; and

allocating, among said one or more original inventors and said one or more contributors, stake in said invention, the allocation involving collaboration support system processes operating in said marketplace.

154. A system for operating an electronic marketplace for the development of inventions, comprising:

a memory having program code stored therein; and

a processor disposed in communication with said memory for carrying out instructions in accordance with said stored program code;

wherein said program code, when executed by said processor, causes said processor to perform the steps of:

soliciting, for use by participants in said marketplace, an invention submission relating to an invention; and

soliciting, from said participants, response submissions concerning said invention,

wherein said response submissions include:

one or more responses relating to contributions to development of the invention;

and

one or more responses relating to exchange of intellectual property rights

regarding the invention.